

# The Commoner.

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## Senator McLaurin's Bolt.

The republican papers are making much of the speech recently delivered by Senator McLaurin, of South Carolina, at Charlotte in that state. And well they may, for it marks the beginning of a movement in the south which will have an influence upon the politics of the nation. It is not likely that Mr. McLaurin will be the leader of the movement because he is handicapped by the fact that he is using his official position to misrepresent the views and interests of his constituents, but some leader will arise to give direction and force to the aristocratic and plutocratic element for which Mr. McLaurin speaks. There is such an element in every community and now that the race question no longer unifies the white people of the southern states, it will doubtless manifest itself. Then, too, the corporations are increasing in number and magnitude in the south and with their growth will come attempts to secure from the government privileges, favors and immunities. The commercialism which has debauched municipal and state governments in the north will soon be apparent in the south and the senatorial contests which thus far have been comparatively free from scandal south of the Mason and Dixon line will show the handiwork of organized capital.

Senator Tillman has already taken up the gauge of battle thrown down by Senator McLaurin and will doubtless be able to marshal a considerable majority in that state, but the same influences are at work in other states where there is greater danger of their success.

Imperialism gives to the plutocrat his opportunity. He can hide behind a pretended patriotism and conceal his mercenary purposes by profuse declamation about the nation's expanding greatness and international obligations. Those who are willing to purchase trade with everybody's blood but their own and who would sell any political or moral principle for a pecuniary consideration rush to defend the administration's Philippine policy.

The democratic sentiment is strong enough to resist and overcome the McLaurin movement, but those who believe that the man is more important than the dollar will have to bestir themselves. The corporations are not much on public meetings but they are diligent in securing delegates to conventions. The real democrats, confident of the merits of their cause, often lack organization and are, therefore, at a disadvantage. Their hope lies in a

prompt, open and persistent appeal to the voters at the primaries.

A white republican party in the south may bring some compensation in that it is likely to divide the colored vote in the north and answer the argument of those northern republicans who have been able to give no better reason for remaining with their party than that the south was solidly democratic.

## A Timely Protest.

The two Grand Army posts of Terre Haute, Ind., have joined in an address relative to the observance of memorial day. It reads as follows:

Christians, Patriots and Countrymen:

Through the thoughtlessness of youth, the greed of gain and the pleasure of debauch, Memorial day is being more and more prostituted from its original intent, and to such an extent that reverence for the dead has been so dishonored that a fearful degeneracy of patriotism is imminent, and the loss of all sense of the sacredness of human feelings and sacrifices.

The sporting events on this national funeral day are as great an offense against good taste and patriotism as for children or other members of the household to turn from the grave of a dead father or patron to similar revelries. The boys ought to stop playing while the funeral is taking place, and not make a gala day of the occasion when even the birds sing a requiem for the nation's dead and the flowers yield their choicest perfume.

As now prostituted, the holiday is an affront to the living soldier and the widows and orphans of the dead. Unless the sacredness of Memorial day can be maintained, it were better that it were stricken from the calendar as a national holiday.

It is a timely protest. Memorial day is set apart for a sad and solemn ceremony. On this day patriotism and affection join in doing reverence to the dead and in decorating with flowers—the sweetest product of nature—the graves of those who in their lives gave supreme evidence of their courage and devotion to duty. It is not a day for festivity and mirth, but a day for retrospection and consecration—a time for that reflection upon the past which will give higher ideals and a nobler purpose for the future.

If an entire day is too long for memorial services it would be better to shorten the holiday than to have a part of the time so employed as to detract from the services appropriate to the occasion.

## Tolstoi's Noble Appeal.

Count Tolstoi has done much for humanity. He has been a heroic figure in his time, and although he has been excommunicated by his church and exiled by his country, he will live in history as one of the greatest of men. Tolstoi's most recent notable action was to address

a letter to the Czar of Russia in which the great humanitarian made this striking appeal:

"Why will you fight with what you can never subdue by force, instead of covering your name with imperishable fame by treading the way of justice? You protect injustice, sire.

"Free the peasant from the brutal tyranny of the officials; give him equal rights with other ranks; do away with the present police system, which demoralizes society, degrades the empire and breeds spies and informers. Do away with restraints on education, so that the road to enlightenment may lie open to all. Prohibit no man from having his free belief, and let religious persecution cease."

It is indeed strange that the monarch who has taken so pronounced a stand in favor of peace as the Czar of Russia has should neglect the opportunity suggested by Tolstoi. It is strange that this monarch has not exerted himself in the direction of making his own subjects happy. As Tolstoi says, the Czar of Russia has an opportunity to cover himself with imperishable fame if he will but do those things that will best contribute to the happiness of his people. What, indeed, is the prestige of a crown that depends solely upon the sword for its existence? How much greater, how much happier, is the monarch whose authority and power do not depend upon the bayonet, but whose government is supported because of the happiness and the contentment of the people over whom he rules.

## An Executive Monopoly.

Sometime ago the federal court at New Orleans was asked for an injunction to prevent further shipments of horses and mules to the British troops in South Africa. This judicial proceeding was considered at a meeting of the cabinet, and the dispatches say that the cabinet took the position that the courts have no jurisdiction in matters affecting the international policies of the government. The members of the cabinet agreed that inasmuch as the New Orleans case involved neutrality the judiciary was without jurisdiction, and that the executive should enjoy a monopoly of authority in the premises.

It will occur to a great many people that the administration is very sensitive on any point that may appear to the disadvantage of the British Empire and to the advantage of the South African Republics.

The claim that in such cases the judiciary has no authority is not sound nor in keeping with well settled practice.

During the administration of Benjamin Harrison, while civil war was pending in Chili, the United States Court at San Diego, California, issued a writ for the seizure of a vessel that had been loaded with munitions of war,